

Ayatolla Khomeini. We are now in the process of training, equipping his forces, so when we pull out of there in a few months they are going to be the strongest military presence in the former State of Yugoslavia.

I think that is absolutely senseless. It is stupid. It is bad foreign policy, and this President has led us into that path. And then when we have four American civilians shot down in Cuba, as we did over the weekend, our response is simply the tepid business that we have seen the President announce in the last 24 hours. He has not yet taken a single step that would show the kind of deterrent message that we need to have if we are going to protect our interest abroad. What message does this pattern of behavior send to other nations considering a confrontation with the United States? When strained credibility finally collapses, deterrents for the protection of our interest has not a prayer. Right now China calculates military action against Taiwan. Rafsanjani and Iran are considering terrorist attacks, and look what we have got with Fidel Castro. I submit we have a failed foreign policy, and this weekend the President's response to it is an example of why that foreign policy has failed.

THE FARM BILL

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHAYS). Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from Missouri [Mr. VOLKMER] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Mr. VOLKMER. Mr. Speaker, I did not come here to talk about this. I listened to the gentleman from Florida, and we have a couple more from Florida maybe going to speak on the same issue, and I hear the criticism of the President on the Cuban situation, yet I do not hear them say one thing of what they would do different than what the President has done, not one. The gentleman from Florida did not mention one thing. I am just waiting to hear what the rest of them have to say. I wonder how many of them want to send troops into Cuba. Should they, should they not? They are from Florida, let them say.

What I really came here to talk about is the autocratic running of this House of Representatives. This is not a democracy in this House any longer. When I say "democracy," I mean a small "D." At times back in my 20 years or 19 years before this, we had farm bills come to this House and every one of them, in 1977, 1981, 1985, in 1990, every one of them had an open rule. All amendments that were germane and had been printed in the RECORD before we took up the bill were eligible to be debated and voted upon. Now, what is the Committee on Rules of this autocratic leadership under his excellency, the Speaker GINGRICH, going to do this afternoon with the rule on this year's farm bill? Should be

1995; it is 1996. They are already late. They are going to restrict the amendments.

There have been 74 amendments noticed to the Committee on Rules. I dare say not more than five or six or seven of those will be made in order by this Committee on Rules. What happened to the openness? What happened to Representatives, like myself and others, who have been elected from rural areas, having a right to get on this floor of this House and offer germane amendments to a farm bill that is going to affect our farmers for the next 7 years? What happened to it? Well, all is gone down the drain under this new leadership. They are told, they are telling us, you take what we are going to offer you or leave it; that is all there is to it.

I, as a representative of my people, do not have a voice any longer in this House when we deliberate legislation that affects them. I think that is terrible. I think the American public should wake up to what is going on in this hallowed Hall of democracy, the one that stands firm above all others in this world for democracy. You do not have democracy in this House. It is gone.

We have an autocratic society led by Speaker GINGRICH. He only believes that he knows the answers and his people know the answers. The rest of us, we are just pawns. I do not know why many of his people even got elected to come here because they just follow his line right down the row, right down the rule. When he tells them to vote that way, that is what they do. They cannot think for themselves, they cannot do for themselves. Well, I, for one, believe that my people sent me here to represent them and to espouse ideas on this floor of the House when legislation comes about that affects them.

I do not believe that I should be gagged by the Speaker of the House, which is going to happen this year on this year's farm bill. And what is really amazing about this whole thing is they are going to tell you, the American public, and the rest of this House that we have to hurry up and get this bill done. Well, folks, we have not been here all month. We have not been here all month. We could have done a farm bill last week. We could have spent a whole week on it, let every Member who has amendments the opportunity to offer it, to debate it and have a vote on it.

Oh, no, we cannot do that. We have to go about campaigning. We have to go about trips to Europe. We have to go about trips to far off lands. We have to do all those things. We cannot work on a farm bill. Well, the real reason is that they do not want some Members to be able to offer their amendments. That is the real reason. They do not want us to be able to offer amendments on the floor. They say their answer to the farm problems, agriculture throughout this Nation, is embodied in their bill. None of the rest of us should

have a right to have any say-so in how that legislation affects our farmers.

Now, if that is not an autocratic society, I would like to know what is. Well, maybe it is more like a dictatorship. Maybe that would be more appropriate than an autocratic society, under a dictatorship where Members do not have an opportunity to express their opinion.

DEADLY MISADVENTURE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHAYS). Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. GOSS] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, Fidel Castro has done it again. He's caused tragedy and pain and suffering in pursuit of brutal repression. Castro's actions this weekend coupled with Clinton administration foreign policy ineptness present the world with another misadventure in the Caribbean, resulting in the apparent death of four innocent human beings and the human rights violations and arrest of dozens of others. Why? Because Fidel Castro is a brutal tyrant and because the Clinton administration has spent its efforts in Cuba on developing ways to appease Fidel Castro and to ease restrictions on the flow of money and people into the country he holds captive. All the while, the President's foreign policy "B" team has studiously ignored Fidel Castro's track record as a liar and a bullying tyrant and an egregious violator of human rights of people he is supposed to serve, not torment.

Those who closely follow Cuba and have unbiased knowledge of Cuban affairs were deeply saddened, but I guess not really surprised, to hear about the tragic murder of Brothers to the Rescue this past weekend. Murder is something Castro does. It is a tool of this dictator's trade. My thoughts went back to the 13th of March tugboat and a long series of similar incidents where innocents were deliberately killed. Added to this is that fact that even as Fidel's jets were scrambling, the crack-down on Cuban dissidents and prodemocracy groups on the ground in Cuba was being stepped up. I hope that this weekend's events will be the wake-up call the Clinton White House has clearly needed on this issue. The announcement that the White House will support legislation to strengthen the embargo is good news, as long as it follows through on that pledge. Rather than cozying up to this long-time self-avowed enemy of the United States, the administration should step up the pressure on his regime. After all, only last year the Clinton White House leveled a devastating and effective blockade embargo against the poorest people in our hemisphere—against the friendly neighboring country of Haiti. After that, I would think stepping up the embargo on Castro's Cuba would be easily justified. Part of doing that will mean

demanding quid pro quo from our allies—and aid recipients—in this hemisphere.

Take Mexico, as an example. If we are going to bail them out, then we expect them to join us in squeezing Fidel Castro out of Havana. The same applies for our European allies, who have benefited greatly from American support against the tide of aggression in Europe. Even now, these allies are keeping Fidel Castro's corrupt regime—a mere 90 miles from our shores—afloat with trade and tourism. In this context, it is scandalous to think that the United States went out of its way to support a new Spanish pro-Castro leader for NATO.

Mr. Speaker, I hope the administration will finally take off the rose-colored glasses and take a close look at the man they have chosen to extend a helping hand to. Ultimately, I think any meaningful examination will produce an understanding that Fidel Castro isn't a man to trust or to bargain with. That reality should be the basis of any United States policy in Cuba.

Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Missouri asked me what I would recommend as a Member from Florida. I would recommend getting serious with the embargo. I would recommend that we remember that Fidel Castro is the problem, and, if you do not know that, you should not be dealing in Cuban foreign policy matters.

SOUL WILL LEAD US INTO THE 21ST CENTURY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentlewoman from Colorado [Mrs. SCHROEDER] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Mrs. SCHROEDER. Mr. Speaker, I have always felt very strongly that if someone showed me their leader they had shown me a part of their soul. I think that is true of nations. When they show you their leader, they have shown you their soul, if that leader has been democratically designated, with a small D, obviously.

But knowing that, I have been very troubled watching what has been going on in this Presidential primary. If what I am saying is true, then what kind of a soul have we got in the United States and in this great Nation, this great Nation built on the premise that we may have all come here in different boats but now we are in the same boat and we bloody well better figure out how we work together. Is that over? Is that day gone? Are we going to try and emulate Bosnia?

On the one hand, I get very serious and very concerned about this. On the other hand, I must say as a Democrat, with a large D, I enjoy it. I kind of decided, now show me your shirt and I know who you are backing. If you wear a flannel shirt, we know who you are backing. You are obviously backing Mr. Alexander. If you wear a silk or

custom-made shirt, you are obviously backing the gentleman from New York, Mr. Forbes. If you come in with a stuffed shirt, you are probably backing the majority leader. And if you come in with a brown shirt, I think we know who you are backing, too.

So it has become kind of the shirt war. We can watch these shirts, and we can kind of tell whose side they are on. As I say, if it were not our Government, it could be really funny. There are some days when I think our President is the luckiest guy in the world. How could he do better than have this all surface in the primary? There are other days when I absolutely panic and say, but wait a minute, wait a minute. This could come to fruition.

Over this break I had the great, great honor of addressing a pluralism conference in Belfast. I always wear my grandmother's wedding ring. My grandmother was married in Derry, Ireland. And as you know, Ireland has been cursed by a resurgence of the troubles, as they say euphemistically. And there we were with the University of Ulster and the Dublin City University cohosting this era of pluralism, trying to bring back the peace, thousands of people in the streets trying to bring back the peace, trying to recapture the momentum, to put this to an end.

Of course my colleagues can imagine, I was absolutely barraged by questions. What in the world is going on in your country? You want to stand there on solid ground and say, you know, we have gone through lots of pain, we have got all sorts of scars from trying to be a pluralistic nation, but, my goodness, we have got all sorts of benefits, too. And basically the bottom line is we know we cannot go around pitting one group against another group.

Yet, they are watching that happen in their newspaper, and they are all scratching their heads saying, wake up, America, what is the matter? First thing you know, you are going to transfer the troubles right back over to your country.

So I think it is a time that all of us have to realize we have been treating politics like consumers, that what really happened in 1994 is that many people did not vote at all. They felt, well, if I do not like them, if they are not 100 percent correct, then I am not going to encourage them. That may work for being a consumer, but it does not work in civics. If you do not vote for somebody because they are not perfect and, heaven forbid, none of us are, then you are still going to have to live under whoever does win.

So you may vote for your imperfect friend and end up with someone who takes the country right off the cliff or in the absolute wrong direction.

So I am hoping all of us start making these distinctions between consumerism and civics, we start getting a little more serious and stop looking just at their shirts and look at their souls. It is their soul that will be governing this country for the next 4 years, if any of

them find themselves in that White House. It is their soul that is going to reflect upon us and on our future and lead this great country into the 21st century.

As we end this century, which was known as the American century, I get goose bumps thinking about it. What will the 21st century be known as? Will we no longer be a player? Will we all be pitted in fighting against each other? I certainly hope not. But I think those are the very, very serious thoughts all Americans must engage in as we watch this Presidential primary continue to unfold.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would inform our guests in the gallery that public displays of approval or disapproval are not permitted.

CREDIT CARD USE BY FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. GEKAS] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Mr. GEKAS. Mr. Speaker, as everyone in the world knows, the Congress of the United States has been living on a credit card for many, many years now, decades. As a result, we have a huge national debt, and annual deficits that impinge upon the standard of living of every American. Well, now there comes to light that part of the credit card problem is in the Government itself.

Starting sometime in 1993 or 1994, apparently Federal agencies have been allowed to issue credit cards to employees who have to do travel and other work for that particular agency. We have learned through a report by the inspector general in the U.S. Department of Commerce that these credit cards have been used not just for travel for governmental purposes but also for jewelry, for liquor, for online computer services, for a variety of things never contemplated for Federal employees to use, to be used in obtaining.

What does this mean? It means that we have a credit card system in play that is being abused and is costing taxpayers money. We did not make this up. This came from an investigation of the inspector general. We have learned that some 500 of these accounts, credit card accounts, had been used for these extraneous purposes, to get extra cash at an ATM facility, to purchase jewelry and liquor. Was that contemplated by the taxpayers of the United States, to give carte blanche, a credit card to Federal employees to spend as they wish?

Some would defend the system and say, well, we have a credit card system, that means faster service and less costly ticket buying, et cetera. But is it worth it when we have all these other abuses that we are discussing?